

**Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project**  
Agency of Human Services, Department of Health, Division of Mental Health  
Weeks Building, 103 South Main Street, Waterbury, VT 05671-1601

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project  
Advisory Group and Interested Parties

FROM: John Pandiani and Stephen Morabito

DATE: August 13, 2004

RE: Respite Care Provided by Children's Services Programs: FY1993-2003

This week's PIP provides a quantitative historical overview of respite care services provided by Children's Services during FY1993 through FY2003. This analysis was conducted in response to a request from Dr. David Fassler, University of Vermont, Department of Psychiatry.

Respite services, "provide a planned break for parents who are caring for a child who is experiencing a serious emotional disturbance. Respite also gives the child a positive social experience with an individual who is trained to offer safe, stimulation activities. Respite care may be provided in the home or in a variety of community settings, for an afternoon, evening, or, in some agencies, overnight or for several days. Respite care can also be provided in a variety of out-of-home settings or by simply having a worker take a child on an outing for several hours. This break allows the parents time to spend with their other children, schedule necessary appointments, or simply rest and re-charge." <sup>1</sup>

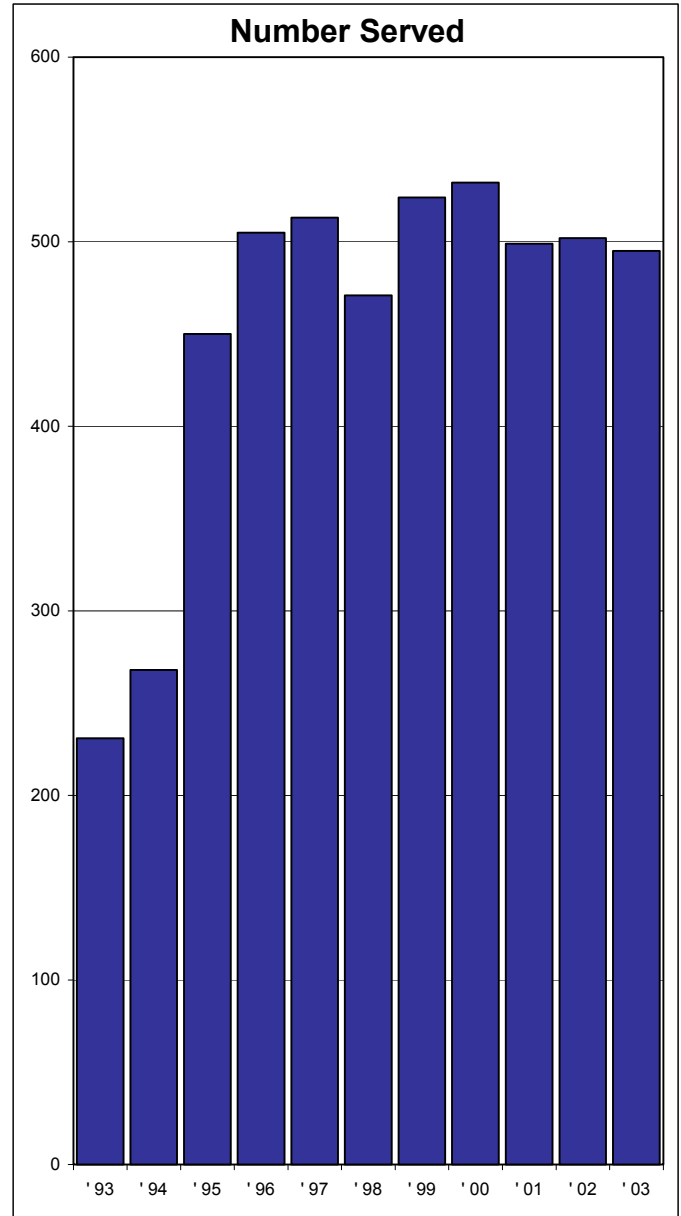
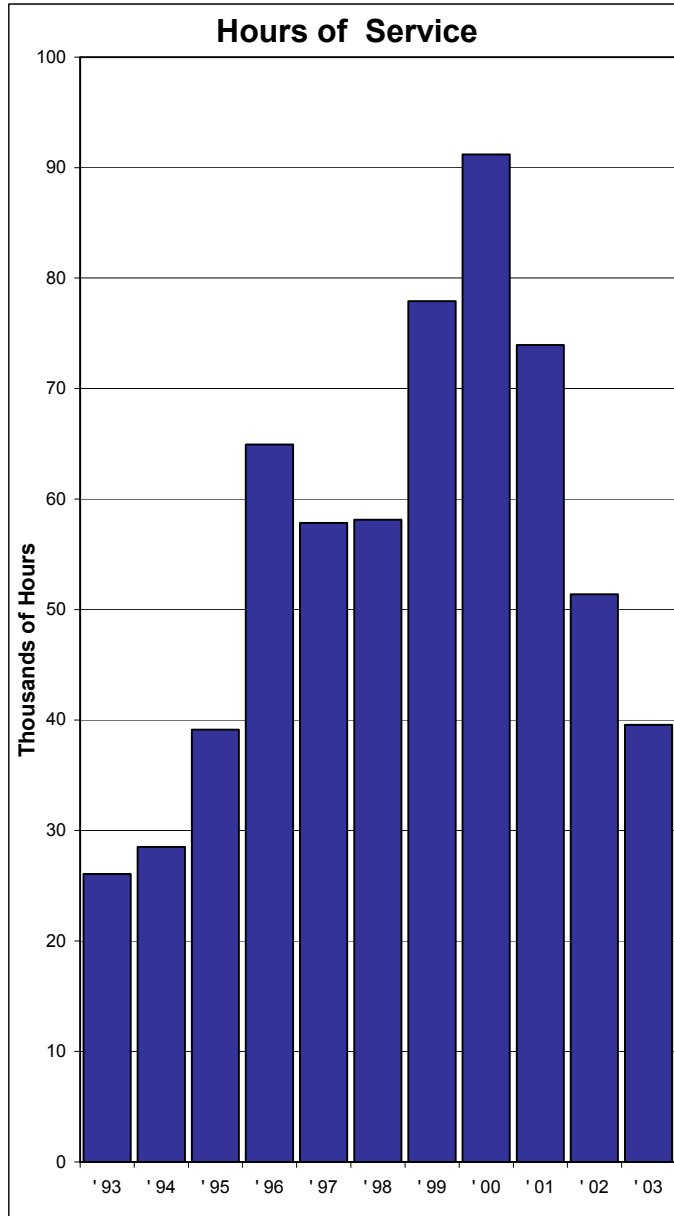
Data for this analysis was drawn from Monthly Service Reports provided to the Division of Mental Health by Vermont's designated agencies. In two cases there are data anomalies that may indicate incomplete reporting for one or more years. One agency reported little or no children's respite care since 1999, and another agency reported almost no respite care services for 1998, but reported substantial numbers for services for other years. These anomalies, however, are not substantial enough to account for the overall trends identified here.

As you will see, there was substantial growth in the volume of children's respite service during 1993 through 2000. The total number of hours of service increased from about 26,000 in 1993 to more than 90,000 in 2000. This growth, however, was followed by a rapid reduction in respite care services to less than 40,000 hours in 2003. The number of young people who received respite care, by contrast, increased rapidly from 231 in 1993 to more than 500 in 1996. The number of young people served has remained at or near that number since 1996.

We look forward to your comments about the quality of the data used in this analysis, any explanations you may have for the patterns reported here, and any suggestions for further analysis of these data to [pip@vdh.state.vt.us](mailto:pip@vdh.state.vt.us) or 802-241-2638.

<sup>1</sup> Mental Health Child, Adolescent and Family Unit (2002) Pathways: A Resource Guide Connecting Families with Services and Supports for Children and Adolescents Who Experience a Serious Emotional Disturbance. (page 40).

## Respite Care Services: Children's Mental Health Fiscal Year 1993-2003



### Number of Hours of Service and Clients

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Hours	26,057	28,528	39,125	64,927	57,845	58,124	77,923	91,196	73,933	51,380	39,560
Clients	231	268	450	505	513	471	524	532	499	502	495

### Average Hours of Service per Client

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Client Hours	113	106	87	129	113	123	149	171	148	102	80

Hours of respite care and number of clients are based on the Monthly Service Reports submitted by the community mental health centers.